

REMARKS

Applicant requests favorable reconsideration and allowance of the above-identified application in view of the above amendments and following remarks.

Claim 18 is now pending in this application. By this Amendment, Claims 7-17 have been canceled and Claim 18 has been amended. Claim 18 is the sole independent claim.


Claims 7-12 and 14-17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as being anticipated by European Patent Application No. 0 902 304 (Nakai, et al.). Claim 13 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Nakai, et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,995,279 (Ogino, et al.). Applicant submits that these rejections are moot in view of the cancellation of those claims.

Claim 18 stands objected to as being dependent on rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicant has rewritten Claim 18 in independent form so as to include all of the features of its base claim.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that independent Claim 18 is now allowable. Therefore, allowance of this application is respectfully solicited.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,


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